

**DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COUNCIL**

**Historic Preservation Council  
January 6, 2016**

**Department of Economic and Community Development  
One Constitution Plaza, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Hartford, CT**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Chair Nelson, Ms. Kane, Ms. Maher, Dr. Jones

**Absent:** Dr. Woodward, Ms. Gilvarg, Dr. Faber

**Staff:** Kristina Newman-Scott, Todd Levine, Jenny Scofield, Mary Dunne, Doug Royalty,  
Cathy Labadia, Julie Carmelich

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 9:35 am

**2. REVIEW OF PUBLIC COMMENT PROCEDURES**

Chair Nelson read the public comment procedures.

**3. CODE OF CONDUCT/CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Chair Nelson read the code of conduct and ethics statement. No conflicts of interest were reported.

**4. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The approval of minutes were tabled for the next HPC meeting.

**5. REPORT OF COMMITTEES**

**6. NOMINATIONS TO THE STATE REGISTER**

**7. HISTORIC DISTRICT/PROPERTIES**

**8. PROGRAM REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT**

9. STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION GRANTS

10. THREATENED PROPERTIES UPDATE

11. PRESERVATION RESTRICTIONS

1. **Gurski Farm**

Julie Carmelich began with a summary on the status of Gurski Farm. SHPO met with town in October and November to discuss what would be the next steps moving forward. At the November 2015 Historic Preservation Council meeting, Brookfield town representatives were present. Ms. Carmelich requested a site visit to ascertain costs of immediate issues, but there has been no response to two emails and a phone call she made. Site visit was put on hold hoping a resolution is reached at today's meeting.

Chair Nelson asked if newly selected First Selectman, Steve Dunn, would like to address the Council. Mr. Dunne turned the meeting over to Alice Dew for details.

Ms. Dew stated that they received an estimate for the dairy barn and walked through farmhouse with town engineer. They identified a clogged catch-basin adjacent to the house. The estimate was for \$2,000 to repair. Ms. Dew said she has not noticed significant water entering house. They plan to get basin cleaned out.

First Selectman added that property is being monitored weekly by Public Works. Public Works plan to first try to clean out pipe. If they are unsuccessful then they will need to excavate basin. At this point, Dr. Jones asked additional questions regarding location, drainage, installation and ownership of basin.

Ms. Dew reported that they will be moving electric panel from basement and install electric heating once they receive approval from SHPO. A dehumidifier will be installed if needed.

SHPO requested that informal plans be sent to or office for new panel location.

Chair Nelson asked if there were plans on moving beyond immediate needs and master plan. First Selectman responded that there was a \$375,000 referendum to improve property but it was turned down. Town would like to bring referendum again but there is no current plan for that.

State Representative Stephen Harding was introduced and joined discussion.

Chair Nelson explained importance of vision and guiding costs. She recommended that this is what HPC would like to see.

First Selectman responded that SHPO controlled property so town is unable to do anything.

Ms. Carmelich suggested that town view relationship with SHPO as a partnership. Preservation is best through utility and SHPO can help achieve that utility if town has a plan.

Ms. Dew stated that the town is considering moving library to property.

First Selectman said that he has spoken to historical society and they had expressed interest. He acknowledged that he cannot sell expenditures to town without having a plan or a vision. But expressed once again that SHPO has all the power and that this was not a partnership and that Town had asked for help but SHPO always says no

Ms. Maher stated that it is the Council and SHPO's desire for Town to succeed and that it is an honor to be listed in the National Register.

First Selectman said that SHPO is requiring fixes that are hundreds thousands in costs. They want to have a master plan to sell property but town will not support. They are willing to immediately stop water damage and electric to control current damage to the Barn, the estimate is \$67k.

Ms. Maher reminded them that they received taxpayer dollars which is why they have an easement. The state has made investment and town now needs to legally find a way to make its commitment.

Ms. Carmelich added that they are surviving members of Gurksi family and she has received phone calls from them. There is a strong sentiment and the town cannot rely on Conservation Commission but needs to bring together professional preservationists. SHPO can provided a list.

First Selectman said he would bring together the right people but he has no money to pay consultant and he has no experience in managing historic sites. He also stated that the problems are primarily construction, but Ms. Carmelich stated that the problem was the plan.

Ms. Dunne pointed out that town has access to CLG funds to assist with plan and use of professionals.

Ms. Carmelich stated that previous plans were not rejected but that there was a not a clear vision for priorities and what needs to be done to achieve goals.

First Selectman agreed and said he will look into CLG funds.

Ms. Maher offered her support to share the Barnum Museum's partnerships experiences.

First Selectman stated he is willing to give anything a try and see a vision and fixes.

Chair Nelson stated that they are invited to the March HPC meeting to monitor progress. They will bring a summary of what steps have been taken to work on building and grant applications for CLG funds.

Dr. Jones asked about fast moving drainage work. Ms. Scofield asked if excavation would follow existing lines. First Selectman said yes. Ms. Scofield stated that she has no archaeology concerns.

By the March meeting: drainage and electrical completed; application to CLG funds submitted; and a master plan update.

12. ARCHAEOLOGICAL PRESERVES

13. REPORT ON MUSEUM PROPERTIES

14. REPORT ON STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE ACTIVITIES

Chair Nelson asked the Council, with reduction in granting should the Council meet less or meet via telecom.

Ms. Scofield spoke about the lineup for State Register for February; but could present for approval every other month.

Ms. Dunne said she had grants that needed approval for March and she prefers the monthly meeting for rolling programs.

Ms. Newman-Scott stated that she would like HPC input for SHPO strategic planning and that could dictate the schedule. Ms. Newman-Scott would prefer bi-monthly meetings.

The February meeting will be done via telecomm and the March meeting will be in person. The schedule for the remaining 2016 monthly meetings will be determined as soon as possible.

15. GENERAL DISCUSSION

16. LIAISON WITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE AGENCIES

**17. OLD BUSINESS**

Kristina Newman-Scott will be meeting with Chandler Saint regarding Venture Smith signage at Barn Island.

**18. NEW BUSINESS**

**19. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 11:05 am. The next Historic Preservation Council meeting is scheduled for February 3, 2016 at 9:30 am via telecomm.